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WONDERFUL!  
WONDERFUL!

HOW COULD IT BE ANYTHING ELSE?



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CAPRA's  
greatest...

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"You Can't Take It With You!"



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do anything  
right!



He couldn't  
do anything  
wrong!



He couldn't do  
ANYTHING!

starring  
JAMES  
STEWART

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and DONNA  
REED

JIMMY'S  
FAVORITE GIRL



with  
LIONEL BARRYMORE  
Gloria Grahame

THOMAS MITCHELL • HENRY TRAVERS • Beulah Bondi • Ward Bond • Frank Faylen

Produced and Directed by FRANK CAPRA

Screenplay by Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett and Frank Capra  
Additional Scenes by Jo Swerling • Released through RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.





*It's*

They were panicky, wanting their money. But George's calm, as he offered them his own savings, quieted them and saved the day



# a Wonderful Life

Starring James Stewart  
and Donna Reed

THEY would be trimming the tree now, Mary and the kids. George's eyes misted, because he couldn't be there this Christmas Eve to pin the bright star to the tip for them.

It made it harder, having all the happiness come back, mixed with the bitter flavor of his failures. But he couldn't allow it to weaken his resolve. After all, it was for them, for Mary and the children, he was doing this last final act of his life.

The prayer he had kept repeating on his way to the river hadn't helped at all. There just wasn't any help, he thought bitterly, for a fellow who had accomplished nothing in the thirty odd years of his life.

It was easier to think of the failures than the happiness as he steeled himself for the plunge into the black water. Then suddenly he heard a splash and a frenzied cry for help. And because he had always responded to someone else's need, he responded now, diving into the water and striking out towards the man floundering helplessly in the swift current.

That was how George met Clarence and embarked on one of the strangest adventures ever to befall a human being.

The strangeness began after they'd sought shelter in the tollhouse near the bridge, and had taken off their wet clothes to dry in front of the fire. George thought he was seeing things as he looked at the older man's voluminous undershirt. He'd bet his last dollar men hadn't worn shirts like that since Revolutionary days. That is, he would if he had a dollar, instead of being \$8,000 in the red.

It was only that afternoon that Uncle Billie had come back to George Bailey's small Building and Loan office, confessing he'd lost the money he was to deposit in the bank. With the bank examiner there going over the firm's books, there was only one thing to do and George did it. After all, eating a big slice of humble pie was better than going to prison.

But he might have known it would be useless, going to old Potter for a loan. Potter had hated him ever since he'd turned down his offer of \$20,000 a year, because George knew it was offered as a bribe so the banker could run the town his own way. Of course Potter refused him the loan. Instead he taunted him with the fact that he was worth more dead than alive, with his insur-

[Continued on page 97]

## CAST

George	JAMES STEWART
Mary	DONNA REED
Mr. Potter	LIONEL BARRYMORE
Uncle Billie	THOMAS MITCHELL
Clarence	HENRY TRAVERS
Mrs. Bailey	BEULAH BONDI
Ernie	FRANK FAYLEN
Harry	TODD KARNs
Bert	WARD BOND

## A Liberty Film

Copyright, 1946, released through RKO-Radio Pictures, Inc.; produced and directed by Frank Capra; screen play by Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich, from an original story by Philip Van Doren Stern



## It's a Wonderful Life

[Continued from page 35]

ance the only asset he had in the world. But it was ridiculous to think of killing yourself for money, a voice said. And as George looked up, startled, he saw Clarence smiling encouragingly at him. At first he was so outraged at the other's smugness that he didn't even realize how odd it was that this pixyish stranger should be able to read his thoughts. If he'd known Clarence was going to be the interfering sort, he wouldn't have saved his life.

But he hadn't saved Clarence. Clarence had saved him, the other said a little testily. He'd come down from heaven, where he'd been a resident almost three hundred years, for the sole purpose of preventing his suicide. It was really too bad of George to make it so difficult for a guardian angel, especially after praying for help. The very least he could do was to co-operate. After all, he might give a thought to his family.

As if he'd been thinking of anyone else, George groaned. They'd be better off if he were dead, just as everybody else would be. And as for himself, he wished he'd never been born at all.

Even Clarence's celestial patience began to wear a bit thin at that. If that was the way George wanted it, that was the way it was going to be. He'd never been born, period! And furthermore, just to show there were no hard feelings, he was going to give George the chance to see what the world would have been like without him.

George had been seeing things at first. Now he was hearing them. Either that, or this mild-looking little man was the goofiest somebody he'd ever run into. For even George, the most trusting guy in all of Bedford Falls, wasn't sap enough to stomach any such nonsense as this.

Even after they'd dressed and gone up to the village and he saw the new name on the sign post, Pottersville, George didn't believe his own eyes. Clarence had hypnotized him, that was all. Either that, or he was getting as goofy as his new pal.

Certainly he felt goofy enough, going through the town, seeing all the changes that had come in the hour or so since he'd left it. Why, even his office wasn't there, for as Clarence explained, Potter had closed the Bailey Building and Loan office just after George's father had died. That was because George hadn't been there to give up going to college, so he could take over and fight old Potter when he had tried to seize control. That was the reason Bailey's park, that trim little community George had planned and built, just wasn't there either.

Funny the lump that came into George's throat, looking at the bleak empty lots bereft of their bright little houses and gardens. Somehow it was even worse, seeing nothing there, than remembering all the things he'd never been able to do—the air fields he'd dreamed of building, and the skyscrapers a hundred stories high, and the bridges a mile long. After all, they'd only been lost dreams, but the development was a lost reality. He'd fought for those houses and the people that lived in them, with old Potter trying to best him at every turn because he wanted to keep people like Bert, the cop, and Ernie, the taxi driver, living in the slums which had made Potter the richest man in town.

It was because of those little houses that George and Mary hadn't been able to take the wedding trip they'd planned. For when Ernie was driving them to the station, they saw the long line of panicky depositors wait-

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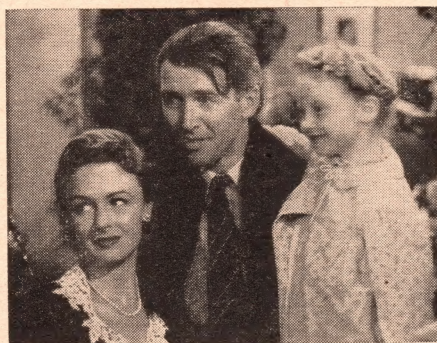
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ing to draw their money out. Forgetting even Mary, George took the \$2,000 he had saved, in spite of the depression, and paid the first ones on the line. And seeing how calm and undisturbed he seemed, the others lost their fears, and the day was saved.

Thinking of Mary made him realize he had to see her just once more. But when they came to his house, it was empty. For as Clarence pointed out, George had never been born, so naturally he'd never married Mary and had four children.

It wasn't true, it couldn't be true! George hurried to his mother's house, sure that Mary would be there. But she wasn't. And his mother looked amazed when he asked if she didn't recognize him, her own son! Her only son, Harry, had died when he was nine, she told him.

George protested vehemently. Why, Harry had lived to become a Navy flier, and one of the major heroes of the war! He'd been given a Congressional Medal when he shot down two enemy planes attacking an American transport. But Clarence only looked at him pityingly. That transport hadn't been saved, every man on it had been lost. For Harry had fallen through the ice on the skating pond when he was a child, because George wasn't there to save him. Strange, wasn't it, Clarence



He knew now that happiness wasn't the distant, unattainable peak he'd been seeking. It was being here with Mary and his family and friends

went on, how every man's life touched so many others. There was Mary, a mousy little woman who had never married.

George couldn't believe it, not even when he saw her looking so different from the laughing Mary he knew. But when he tried to take her in his arms, she screamed, and Bert the policeman came on the run. And as he struggled with him, George knew he only wanted one thing, to be the way he had been, to have Mary know him again.

It was strange then, how Bert suddenly stopped struggling with him and grinned as he said he'd been looking all over town for him. But even being arrested didn't trouble George now as he started for home again.

And this time the old house was really home, with the Christmas tree lighted and the living room filled with friends. George had never realized how many he had before. Every human being in town, except Potter, was there because they'd heard he was in trouble. And every one of them had brought every cent they could lay their hands on, to help him.

Never had there been such happiness as filled George's heart then. They didn't matter any more, the dreams that had died, the riches that had never come. For as he held Mary again, he knew success wasn't the unattainable, distant peak he'd been seeking. That it had been here, all the time, with Mary and his family and his friends, locked safe and deep in his own heart.

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## ON THE SET OF

### *It's a Wonderful Life*

A SCREEN kiss is the best part of a day's work for most actors, but to shy James Stewart, his first postwar love scene for *It's a Wonderful Life* was a big problem.

For weeks, the love scene had been side-tracked, but Director Frank Capra decided it couldn't be staved off any longer. At the last moment, Stewart pleaded, "Let's skip it for a few days. Honest, Frank, I'm not ready." Capra suggested that perhaps Jimmy was allowing the matter to assume too much importance. After all, a kiss is just a kiss, he noted.

However, Jimmy replied, "Yeah, but a guy loses his technique, and you've got to have technique to make the scene look good." Mr. Capra countered that he couldn't understand Jimmy's lack of finesse, since, as Hollywood's most eligible bachelor, he could have his choice of beauties waiting to help him improve his technique.

After much talking, Capra finally had Stewart ready for the love scene with Donna



Man-about-town Jimmy Stewart is as bashful as a schoolboy when it comes time for the love scenes

Reed. Much to Stewart's surprise, it went beautifully, climaxed by a kiss that put the entire crew in a romantic mood. Capra, exultant, cried "Cut!" Then the script girl wailed, "But Mr. Capra, they forgot a page and a half of dialogue!"

"Oh, gosh," Stewart moaned and beseeched Capra. "I can't do it again, honest I can't, Frank."

And Capra, who is noted for greatly revising or plainly ignoring scripts, grinned, "With a technique like that, who wants to listen to dialogue?"

Incidentally, Jimmy recently had two surprise visitors on the set—his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alec Stewart of Indiana, Pa. It was the first time the Stewarts had seen Jimmy work before the camera during his ten years in pictures. Surprisingly, they were not the least impressed by their son's performance. The reason for the lack of parental pride was not poor acting, though. In the scene they were watching, Jimmy was called upon to warble a romantic song to Donna Reed. After hearing his attempts, Mrs. Stewart declared, "Hollywood hasn't changed him a bit; he still can't sing."

And Jimmy's father added, "Awful! Jim's tall and thin like Sinatra, but there the resemblance ends."



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